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Insurance and Real Estate Committee
Room 2800, Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106

April 14, 2010

Testimony in support of Senate Bill 50, AN ACT CONCERNING ORAL
CHEMOTHERAPY TREATMENTS

Senator Crisco, Representative Fontana and members of the Committee:

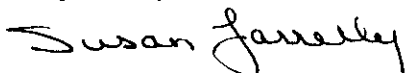
My name is Susan Farrelly and I am a nurse who has worked for many years treating patients with cancer at Black Rock Medical Group (Fairfield, CT). In my job I have seen many patients who have struggled to afford the oral chemotherapy agents they need to treat their cancer. Unfortunately, there are instances where oral agents are the best or only option for a particular patient but the patient is made to pay more out of their own pocket simply because it is not an intravenous or injectable product.

In my experience, obtaining prior authorization for oral chemo drugs has been extremely frustrating. Insurance companies require their own documentation consisting of testing and results, office notes and evaluations. Further, they also require a one-on-one conversation with the Oncologist and their own Medical Authority. This can take at least a week and usually a lot longer. The stress of the newly diagnosed patient increases as each day passes. Approval, if obtained, will frequently lull you into believing that good news has been obtained. The patient now faces "cost factors". In 9 out of 10 cases, the cost is prohibitive. We now have to proceed to a third party pay situation. This process of application leads to another waiting period with increased anxiety to the patient. And there is no guarantee of approval. I believe patients, experiencing the limits of stress when facing the unknown, should at the very least, know that they have access to the drug that is best for them and to also know that it is within their reach.

It is for these reasons that I urge members of the committee to vote in favor of Senate Bill 50 which would provide greater coverage and access for chemotherapy agents regardless of how they are taken by the patient.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,



Susan Farrelly
87 Killian Ave.
Trumbull, CT 06611